Telework Implementation: From Gaining Management Commitment to Evaluation



Elham Shirazi May 31, 2012

e-planning

Return on Investment (ROI)

- Increased worker productivity (10-20%)
- Reduced employee absenteeism (2-4 days)
- Increased employee morale, recruitment, retention (50-65%)
- Extension of work hours without adding staff
- Better communication among time zones
- SOLUTIONS FOR BUSINESS CONTINUITY
- Lowered facility costs, demand for parking spaces (10-90%)
- Environmentally friendly "green" program (priceless)



When Teleworking is Implemented Correctly, Productivity Increases

- 74% of teleworkers report increased productivity
- 85% of managers say productivity increases or stays the same
- Only 2% of managers report a decrease in productivity
- Among all who reported an increase in productivity, average increase is 20%
- 96% of teleworkers claim teleworking has not decreased work quality, and 91% of managers agree

*Based on a Clean Air Campaign survey of about 363 teleworkers and 124 managers.



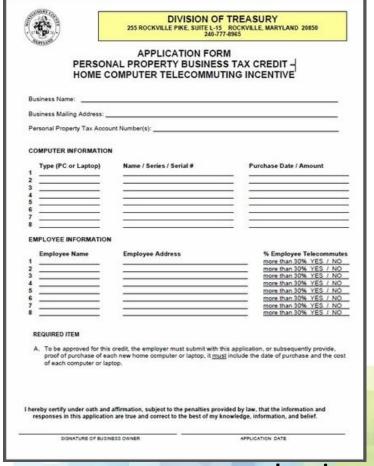
Montgomery County Telework Incentives

Telework Tax Credit:

Employers in Montgomery County can receive an annual tax credit against the personal property tax for the purchase of a new home computer or new laptop computer (up to 50% of the cost of each new computer) to establish a new offsite employee workstation.

Contact: Dept. of Finance in Rockville, MD, (240) 777-8931

http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/g
ovtmpl.asp?url=/content/finance/tax_cre
dit_exempt.ASP#p17





Montgomery County Telework Incentives

Green Business Certification:

Montgomery County Maryland's Green Business Certification Program is designed to recognize businesses and other entities that have taken voluntary steps to protect, preserve, and improve the environment. Establishing a Telework program is one of the steps that can be taken by employers towards Certification as a Green Business.

Contact: Doug Weisburger

Green Business Certification Program Manager

(240) 777-7775

http://mcgreenbiz.org



Implementation Steps

1.	Gain Management	Commitment

- 2. Select Telework Coordinator
- 3. Form a Steering Committee
- 4. Develop Policies/Agreement
- 5. Assess Costs and Savings
- 6. Develop Technology Component
- 7. Select Participants and Supervisors
- 8. Implement Program
- 9. Train Participants
- 10. Evaluate and Troubleshoot

Month 1

Month 1

Months 1-2

Months 1-2

Months 2-3

Months 2-3

Months 3-4

Ongoing

Month 4

Ongoing



Telework-related Issues

- Selection
- Coverage
- Worker's Comp
- Technology
- Connectivity
- Training
- Non-teleworkers





Gain Management Commitment

- Convince upper management
- Convince middle management
- Convince employees
- Develop proposal





Upper Management Issues

- Productivity
- Cost
- Coverage
- Bottom-line
- Overhead
- Recruitment / Retention
- Sustainability

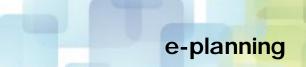




Middle Management: More Sensitive to Day-to-Day Issues

- Performance Issues "How do I know they are working?"
- Communication Issues "How will I reach staff?"
- Cost Issues "How can we afford a telework program?"
- Technology Considerations "Do we now have to equip the employees at home and at work?"





Middle Management: Other Issues

- Equity/Haves and Have-Nots —
 "What about those who cannot telework?"
- Selection "How do I select the right employees?"
- Loss of control and corporate loyalty
 "Will these employees now start looking for other work?"
- Safety/Ergonomics "Do we inspect the home office?"





Getting Organized

- Develop Proposal
- Define Telework
- Emphasize Benefits
- Be Bottom-Line Oriented
- Determine Cost and Savings
- Assess Technology/Connectivity Needs
- Identify Next Steps



Select Coordinator

- Sells the program
- Makes presentations
- Recruits supporters and pilot
- Plays a leadership role
- Helps make selection
- Troubleshoots
- Pioneers the program







Form a Steering Committee

- Decision-makers
- Key departments
- Pilot group
- Commitment
- Sells the program





Develop Policies and Agreement

- Goals
- Arrangement
- Frequency
- Worker's compensation and liability
- Resources

- Technology
- Insurance
- Work space
- Selection criteria
- Non-telecommuters
- Communication needs
- Scheduling issues





Conduct a Jobs Assessment

Job Function

- Project oriented
- Measurable impact on others
- Need for equipment
- •Face-to-face interaction with others

Teleworker

- Organizational skills
- Flexibility
- Self-disciplined
- Experience
- Working relations
- Supervisor
- Customer impact



Analyzing Job Functions for Telework

Job Function	Always	Sometimes	Never
Tasks can be done independently			
Work completed is measurable based on Deliverables			
Quality and quantity of work are measurable			
Non-teleworker functions are minimally affected			
Need for specialized material or equipment is minimal			
Deals with confidential and proprietary information			
Requires teamwork			
Need for face-to-face interaction can be managed			



Eligibility Factors

- Performance rating
- Tenure
- Grade level
- Position description
- Organizational structure
- Other _____



Employee Characteristics

- Self-motivated, self-managing
- Results-oriented
- Conscientious, organized
- Independent worker
- Flexible
- Understands job requirements
- Understands organizational policies and procedures
- Communicates well with colleagues and clients
- Handles change well



Analyzing Employee Characteristics for Telework

Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5
Self-disciplined					
Experience and skill level					
Past and current performance productivity levels					
Organizational skills					
Communication skills					
Relationships with others					
Relationships with clients					
Ability to be flexible					



Assess Technology Component

- Equipment needs
- Frequency
- Connectivity issues
- Pre-testing
- Tech support







Estimate Costs and Savings

- Identify savings
- Identify costs
- Who pays for what?
- Start cost neutral for pilot





Training and Evaluation

- Training
 - Prior to teleworking
 - Managers
 - Teleworkers







Adjustments for Management When Teleworking

- Managing by results
- Trust
- Developing good communication and access procedures
- Maintaining team environment
- Concerns regarding loss of control



Team-Building While Teleworking

- Keeping the team together
- In-office meetings
- Teleconferencing
- Social activities
- Lunches





Telemanaging through Goal-Setting with Employees

- Assist employees in organizing work through on one meetings prior to teleworking for the first few times
- Assigning work to employees
- Defining objectives and deliverables
- Establishing timeframes
- Reviewing status
- Coaching employees



Establish Communications Standards

- Establishing protocol
- Schedule
- Responding to e-mail and phone calls
- Co-workers
- Non-teleworkers
- Outside contacts: members, vendors
- Supervisors



Establish Communications Standards

- Assess current ways of communicating with employees and how teleworking will change communications
- Less impromptu face to face
- More e-mails and telephone calls
- More saved messages
- More scheduled face to face communication



Every Employee is Different

- Directing
- Coaching
- Advising
- Delegating

- Developing trust
- Managing electronically
- Asking questions
- Encouraging independence





Planning for Success

- Act on problems as they arise
- Be honest with teleworkers
- Ask for input from coworkers
- Respect the teleworking arrangement
- Maintain scheduled team and individual meetings
- Integrate a review process
- There is an adjustment period



Adjustments for Employees

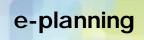
- Impact on teamwork?
- How will my manager know that I am working?
- Increased isolation from co-workers
- Developing good organizational skills
- Dealing with distractions in the home environment



Teleworkers: Getting Organized

- Pick a work location
- Establish a routine
- Replace ritual of getting ready for office
- Organize work the day before
- Have an end of the day ritual

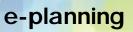




Teleworkers: Managing Your Work

- Maintain contact with coworkers
- Have a system at home
- Stick to deadlines
- Keep your manager informed
- Attend scheduled meetings
- Schedule meetings with coworkers and others

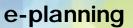




Teleworkers: Training Family and Friends

- The message is that you are at home working!
- Decide on what interruptions are OK
- Set rules for office materials
- Don't telework if there are problems at home
- Handle jokes and negative comments





In-person Meetings While Teleworking

- Meeting for the first time
- Kick off meeting for complex project
- Delicate issues (body language)
- Social reasons
- Team-building





Evaluation

- Focus Groups
- Interviews
- Surveys





Successful Telework Programs have Certain Characteristics

- Initial pilot
- Top level commitment
- Planning and selection process
- Seamless
- Flexible
- Fit corporate culture
- Plan for access and communication
- Expandable



Contact Information

Sam Oji, Senior Planning Specialist

Department of Transportation

Division of Transit Services

Commuter Services Section

(240) 777-8386

Samuel.Oji@montgomerycountymd.gov

www.montgomerycountymd.gov/commute





e-planning